



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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The Future of Higher Education

By Congressman Ron Kind

In 1965, Congress passed the Higher Education Act to provide all Americans, regardless of their income level, greater educational opportunities. The act recognizes the shared benefits, by both society and the individual, of a higher education, including increased economic prosperity, greater civic involvement, and national security.

As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I am committed to fighting for increased funding for education and ensuring the money is being spent on the areas we need most. Congress has begun to reauthorize the Higher Education Act; this act has not been considered since 1998. A top priority during reauthorization must be to ensure that students are prepared for college and that it is affordable for all who wish to attend. A good government can be fiscally responsible enough to balance the books, while investing wisely to ensure that students have access to the quality education they deserve.

College is an investment that pays off over a lifetime. Median annual earnings for year-round, full-time workers with bachelor's degrees are about 60 percent higher than earnings for those with only a high school diploma. Yet, about 64 percent of all students now borrow to finance college costs, and typical student loan debt has nearly doubled to \$17,000. Moreover, cost factors prevent 48 percent of college-qualified high school graduates from attending a four-year institution and 22 percent from attending any college at all.

Last spring, I held a listening session on your campus about higher education, but knowing how busy life as a student can be, I wanted to be sure that you had the opportunity to contribute to the debate that is going on in Washington on higher education. Your input is important to ensure that the issues and concerns of people in western Wisconsin are represented. Please feel free to contact my office at 1-888-442-8040 with any thoughts or concerns or submit by email at: www.house.gov/kind/emailron.html. I also would encourage you to write me at the email address above to join my student advisory committee on higher education issues. This will allow us to communicate as we move forward in reauthorizing higher education.

Best of luck in your studies this year, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts regarding higher education or any other issue that may concern you.